



## **NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION**

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# **NRHA ENDORSES MEDICARE REFORM LEGISLATION**

**(Washington, D.C.)** — The National Rural Health Association (NRHA) today expressed its support for the conference report on H.R. 1, the Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act, expected to be considered by Congress in the near future. The newly created prescription drug benefit, along with provisions creating increased equity in Medicare reimbursements to rural providers, is a strong step forward in strengthening the healthcare system for nearly 60 million rural Americans.

“This bill is a big boost for the rural healthcare system.” NRHA President Wayne Myers, MD said. “A stronger healthcare system will help revitalize rural economies which will positively impact rural Americans throughout the country.”

In addition to the creation of a Medicare prescription drug benefit for America’s seniors, the legislation provides approximately \$28 billion to correct a number of basic inequities in Medicare’s reimbursement system for rural providers. Despite serving a disproportionately higher percentage of Medicare beneficiaries, rural providers have been struggling for years with an intrinsically unfair system that reimburses rural providers less than their urban counterparts for the same procedures. The rural provisions in this legislation will improve the rural healthcare system allowing it to continue to provide quality care to rural seniors.

“It is critical to the health of rural Americans these provisions are enacted this year to preserve access to local healthcare services.” Dr. Myers said. “We urge all members of the House and Senate to support this measure.”

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